



# Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association

*An association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers.*

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Executive Secretary

**William Troxell**  
Richfield

July 16, 2007

*The Honorable Timothy Holden  
United States House of Representatives  
2417 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515*

*Dear Representative Holden:*

*Traditionally most of the Farm Bill programs have dealt with the major commodity crops so that vegetable growers and other specialty crop producers were not as directly affected by the Farm Bill. However, as a group specialty crops account for a significant portion of American agriculture and deserve equally significant attention to their needs and concerns in the 2007 Farm Bill. Thus we are encouraged that consideration is being given to including provisions in the new Farm Bill that will benefit our growers.*

*Specifically, we support the proposed changes to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program that will provide funding and changes to the evaluation process. Evaluating applications on local priorities and allowing grouping of applications should help our growers obtain these funds. We also support the amendment that exempts packing and handling from the Adjust Gross Income limit.*

*We support the funding for the Conservation Innovation Grants, and especially the funding specifically set aside for specialty crops and organic producers.*

*We support the effort to allow USDA to work cooperatively with state/local governments and producer groups in delivering financial assistance and providing technical assistance.*

*As an organization, we have a long history of supporting vegetable and small fruit research. However, we can only fund a small part of the research that is needed, thus we wholeheartedly support language that makes specialty crop research a high priority at USDA.*

*I have attached copies of our Association's Policy Resolutions relative to the Farm Bill for your information. We very much appreciate your consideration and support for specialty crop provisions in the Farm Bill. On behalf of the Association,*

*Sincerely,*

*William Troxell  
Executive Secretary*

# ***Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association***

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## ***Policy Resolutions***

The following policy resolutions have been adopted by the General Membership at the Annual Meetings of the Association to set forth the position of the Association on various issues that impact the vegetable, potato and berry industries of the Commonwealth.

### **Farm Support Programs (2006, 07)**

- Supporting funding of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act (2006); and
- Supporting the Equitable Agriculture Today (EAT) for a Healthy America Act (2007).

### **2007 Farm Bill (2006, 07)**

- The Association is on record as advocating that the following changes be made when a new Farm Bill is enacted (2007):
- Guaranteed payments for program commodity crops should be discontinued in favor of Loan Deficiency Payments and Counter-Cyclical Payments rewarding those who actually produce the crops.
  - If guaranteed payments are continued for program commodity crops, that farmers be prohibited from planting vegetables on acreage for which they receive government subsidy payments unless such vegetable acreage is contracted for processing use only and unless the subsidy on such acreage is forfeited for the years in which vegetables are produced.
  - Traditional formula funding for agricultural applied research and extension at land grant institutions should be restored to historical levels.
  - Funding for specialty crops research and export market development should be increased.
  - Funding for conservation practices that enhance water and environmental quality should be increased, including funding for irrigation equipment and source development.
  - Conservation programs such as CREP must be revised to only apply to highly erodeable or otherwise unproductive land so that they do not increase land rental rates.
  - Shipping of agricultural exports should not be restricted to American ships which typically have higher freight rates than prevailing free market rates for international shipping.
  - Farm operations that are in practice operated as a single entity must be registered as one entity for Farm Bill programs rather than as several separate operations under the names of individuals employed by the operation for the purpose of skirting maximum payment limits.
  - Adjusted Gross Revenue LITE insurance should not require operators to purchase separate multi-peril policies for all their crops that be may eligible for multi-peril coverage.